



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20554

Brendan Carr
Chairman

March 06, 2026

Honorable Richard Blumenthal
Ranking Member
Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: February 23, 2026 Letter to FCC

Dear Ranking Member Blumenthal:

Thank you for your February 23, 2026 letter regarding the Federal Communications Commission's regulation of broadcasters.¹ I appreciate the opportunity to respond to your letter and correct the record. As detailed below, your communication is based on news stories that have proven to be nothing more than a series of hoaxes.

As a threshold matter, your letter repeats the false claim that the FCC censored a recent interview that a late-night TV host wanted to conduct with a legally qualified candidate for political office. Indeed, the politician you rely on for the claim stated that the "FCC refused to air" his interview. Of course, that never happened. The FCC does not air or refuse to air any program. But stating so does get you clicks in today's media environment. For my part, I first learned about this after the late-night host had already conducted and publicly released the interview with the politician.

Later, some advocates backed away from that initial claim only to retreat to another one that appears to be equally false. Specifically, advocates started to claim that it was CBS that refused to air the interview. That claim also apparently fell apart. CBS itself put out a statement saying that the show was not at all prohibited from broadcasting the interview. Rather, CBS states that they provided the show with guidance on conducting the interview while also accounting for the rules that have long applied to all broadcasters. Specifically, CBS stated:

THE LATE SHOW was not prohibited by CBS from broadcasting the interview with Rep. James Talarico. The show was provided legal guidance that the broadcast could trigger the FCC equal-time rule for two other candidates, including Rep. Jasmine

¹ Letter from Sen. Richard Blumenthal, Ranking Member, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations to Mr. Patrick Webre, Acting Bureau Chief, Enforcement Bureau, FCC, and Ms. Erin Boone, Acting Bureau Chief, Media Bureau, FCC (Feb. 23, 2026) (Blumenthal Letter), <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2026-2-23-Letter-from-Sen.-Richard-Blumenthal-to-Patrick-Webre-and-Erin-Boone.pdf>.

Crockett, and presented options for how the equal time for other candidates could be fulfilled. THE LATE SHOW decided to present the interview through its YouTube channel with on-air promotion on the broadcast rather than potentially providing the equal-time options.²

Under the relevant regulations, broadcast TV stations are not prohibited from conducting any interview. For instance, covered broadcasters can give comparable time and placement to other legally qualified candidates. But rather than broadcasting in compliance with longstanding rules, the politician and late-night TV host decided to act like victims while legacy media eagerly amplified their false claims. At the end of the day, many people are now saying that the politician and TV host concocted this scheme so that they could gain an advantage over another candidate in a Democrat primary. You would have to ask them whether they did this for their own political gain or to hurt another Democrat.

I will also point out that the federal equal time obligations are nothing new. Indeed, Congress codified the law and certain exceptions to it all the way back in 1934 and 1959, respectively. Congress passed the law to ensure that the people — not media gatekeepers — decide the outcome of elections. I happen to think that is a good policy. It is pro speech and pro democracy. But if you do not want the FCC to enforce this law, I am happy to abide by any changes to the statute that you pass in Congress and that are signed into law by the President.

Sincerely,



Brendan Carr
Chairman

² Sarah Lynch Baldwin, “Stephen Colbert slams CBS again amid controversy over James Talarico interview”, *CBS News*, updated February 18, 2026, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/stephen-colbert-slams-cbs-again-james-talarico-interview/>